(b) With a view to explore the untapped markets such as African countries, along with increasing export to established markets, the Spices Board has evolved a three-pronged approach to:

(1) identify countries where the performance has been good and making special efforts in these markets to improve the performance further.

(2) identify new countries where some beginning can be made.

(3) to identify areas where quick results can be achieved to make-up the shortfall. Various steps to boost exports of spices include:

sending of delegations to selected markets; inviting buyers from selected markets to India; participation in selected International fairs; publicity through various media on Indian spices; promotion of spices in branded consumer packs to create identity for the products; promotion of Spices Board quality logo to promote quality and Indian-ness etc.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) For increasing the production and productivity of spices, a Central Sector Integrated Programme for the development of spices is being implemented. Various measures include:

(i) production and supply of planting materials;

(ii) establishment of demonstration-cum-seed multiplication plots;

(ii) distribution of input kits and plant protection sprayers; and

(iv) irrigation and land development programmes etc.

Incentives for export sector

2348. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to announce many incentives for the export sector;

(b) if so, by when these are likely to be announced; and

(c) what are the sectors that are likely to be given priority for the export?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Review of the Export and Import Policy is a continuous process and charges in the Policy are made as and when considered necessary.

World Bank aid for rubber plantation

2349. SHRI SUDHIR RANJAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state

(a) whether the World Bank has sanctioned Rs. 20 crores for expansion of Rubber Plantation in Tripura;

(b) if so, whether the fund has been placed with the parties concerned for the purpose for which the fund was sanctioned;

(c) which are the organisations to be benefited by the Fund;

(d) in what manner the loan will be repaid;

(e) what will be the rate of interest on this loan;

(f) whether there are any prospects of getting more loans for rubber plantation in future; and

(g) what will be the Central Government involvement in this fund?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The World Bank has offered assistance amounting to International Development Agency (IDA) credit equivalent to US $ 92 million (Special Drawing Rights) (SDR 664 million) for the future development of rubber plantations including those in Tripura.

(b) The financial assistance from the World Bank has not been received pending signing of the final agreement between World Bank and the Government of India.

(c) The Project to be implemented by the World Bank assistance will ultimately benefit the rubber growers. It will also result in socio economic upliftment of the women and 4500 tribal families in Tripura.

(d) and (e) The grant received from the International Development Agency has to be refunded during the period 2002 to 2027. Interest on loan and repayment will be as per standard terms and conditions for World Bank Projects;

(f) and (g) At present, no proposal is being pursued for more loans from the World Bank for rubber plantations.

Committee on Trade Policy reforms

2350. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a High Level Committee on Trade Policy Reforms was recently set up by Government;

(b) if so, whether the Committee has since submitted its Report to Government;

(c) if so, the details of its recommendations; and

(d) what are the details of the recommendations which have been accepted and implemented by Government so far?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Government had constituted a High Level Committee on Trade Policy Reforms, consisting of officials from different Ministries, to work out the modalities for the progressive elimination of licensing and quantitative restrictions on the import of capital goods, raw materials and components. The members of the Committee had met from time to time and had discussions on the elimination of licensing and quantitative restrictions on imports. No formal report has been submitted by the Committee. However, the new Export and Import Policy announced on 31 March, 1992 for the 5 years period from 1st April 1992 to 31st March, 1997, has abolished licensing and quantitative restrictions on the import of capital goods, raw materials, intermediates and components. The new EXIM Policy permits the import of all goods without a licence except those that are included in the Negative List of Imports. Thus the purpose for which this Committee was set up has been substantially achieved.

Tobacco exports to Russia

2351. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total quantity of tobacco so far exported during the year 1992-93 to Russia;

(b) what is the value of such tobacco exported in cash terms; and

(c) whether there is any scope for more tobacco exports in 1992-93 to Russia?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND